



AGENDA

For a meeting of the
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL
to be held on
WEDNESDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2006
at
2.30 PM
in
COMMITTEE ROOM 3, COUNCIL OFFICES, ST. PETER'S HILL, GRANTHAM
Duncan Kerr, Chief Executive

Panel Members:	Councillor Dorrien Dexter, Councillor Kenneth Joynson, Councillor Mrs Rosemary Kaberry-Brown, Councillor John Nicholson (Chairman), Councillor Stanley Pease, Councillor Mrs Judy Smith, Councillor Ian Stokes, Councillor Mike Williams (Vice-Chairman) and Councillor Mrs Azar Woods
Scrutiny Officer:	Paul Morrison 01476 406512 p.Morrison@southkesteven.gov.uk
Scrutiny Support Officer:	Jo Toomey 01476 406152 j.toomey@southkesteven.gov.uk

Members of the Panel are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed below.

1. SERVICE PLANS: GATEWAY REVIEW 1

The Panel to undertake the first gateway review of the following service plans:

- Economic Development and Town Centre Management
- Planning Policy
- Development and Building Control

Copies of the relevant service plans have been distributed to members of the panel as background papers.

WORKING STYLE OF SCRUTINY

The Role Of Scrutiny

- To provide a “critical friend” challenge to the Executive as well as external authorities and agencies
- To reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities
- Scrutiny Members should take the lead and own the Scrutiny Process on behalf of the public
- Scrutiny should make an impact on the delivery of public services

Remember...

- Scrutiny should be member led
- Any conclusions must be backed up by evidence
- Meetings should adopt an inquisitorial rather than adversarial style of traditional local government committees

Version 1

South Kesteven DC

Pro-forma for Service Plans

Period of the Plan	Prescriptive for the financial year beginning 1 st April 2006. Indicative for the following two years
Service:	Development Control
Service Manager:	Richard Edwards

Corporate Context

The LSP – The Joined-up Approach

As a leading member of the South Kesteven Local Strategic Partnership, the Council has worked closely with representatives of the business, voluntary and public sector to profile the needs of the area. This has resulted in the LSP adopting the following long-term vision:

To ensure that by 2020 our residents live in one of the ten most desirable locations in the country and are proud that they have the skills necessary to participate in sustainable communities that are safe, healthy and economically vibrant”.

In order to translate this vision into action, the LSP has approved the following four priorities, which will guide the new Community Strategy currently being prepared:

- a) **Community safety and health.**
- b) **Housing and sustainable communities**
- c) **Town centres and economic development**
- d) **Improved transport and access.**

SKDC – The Vision

The District council’s vision complements and supports the vision of the LSP it is:

‘To ensure that the residents of South Kesteven are proud of their district and their Council’

This concept of “Pride” is articulated as a series of five steps detailed in a series of leaflets:

- a) **Performance and Priorities**
- b) **Respect and recognition for diversity**
- c) **Informing and Involving**
- d) **Developing Communities**
- e) **Empowering and enabling**

SKDC - Strategic Alignment

In making strategic choices regarding service delivery the Council has taken account of the shared priorities that have been agreed at national level between representatives from Local Government and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). These are:

Sustainable Communities and Transport
Safe and Strong Communities
Healthier Communities
Older People
Children and Young Persons

Both these shared aspirations, and the priorities of the LSP, are incorporated into the Council's four ambitions:

Economic Development
Community Safety
Healthy Environment
Community Engagement

SKDC – Operational Alignment

To ensure that all our services are assessed against, and reflect, these ambitions the Council has undertaken a comprehensive service prioritisation exercise using a four-fold classification of service priorities.

The linkage between these new ambitions and our current priorities, which were reviewed in May 2005, is demonstrated in the following table:

<i>Proposed Ambition:</i>	Priorities that it incorporates		Shared national priorities that it reflects
	Category A	Category B	
Economic Development	Town-centre regeneration	Business Development Planning Car Parks	Sustainable Communities and Transport
Safer communities	Anti-social behaviour	Diversity. Vulnerable Persons Housing Management Affordable Housing	Safer and Stronger Communities
Healthier Environment	Street Sweeping Recycling	Public Toilets	Healthier Communities
Engagement	Access	Communications LSP and Community Strategy	Children and Young People Older People

Full details of the categorisation of all services can be found in this report

Socio-economic Profile

A fully area profiling of the District was undertaken and reported to the LSP by the Economic Development team in the summer of 2005. A copy of this report is available to assist managers in the preparation of their service plans.

Value for Money and Performance at a Corporate Level

Using data recently made available by the Audit Commission the Corporate Management Team are currently preparing a fully Value for Money assessment of the Council which will be available in September. This will assist managers in understanding how the Council compares at a corporate level and also provide a source of data for drawing comparisons at a service level and populating the balanced scorecard.

Relevance

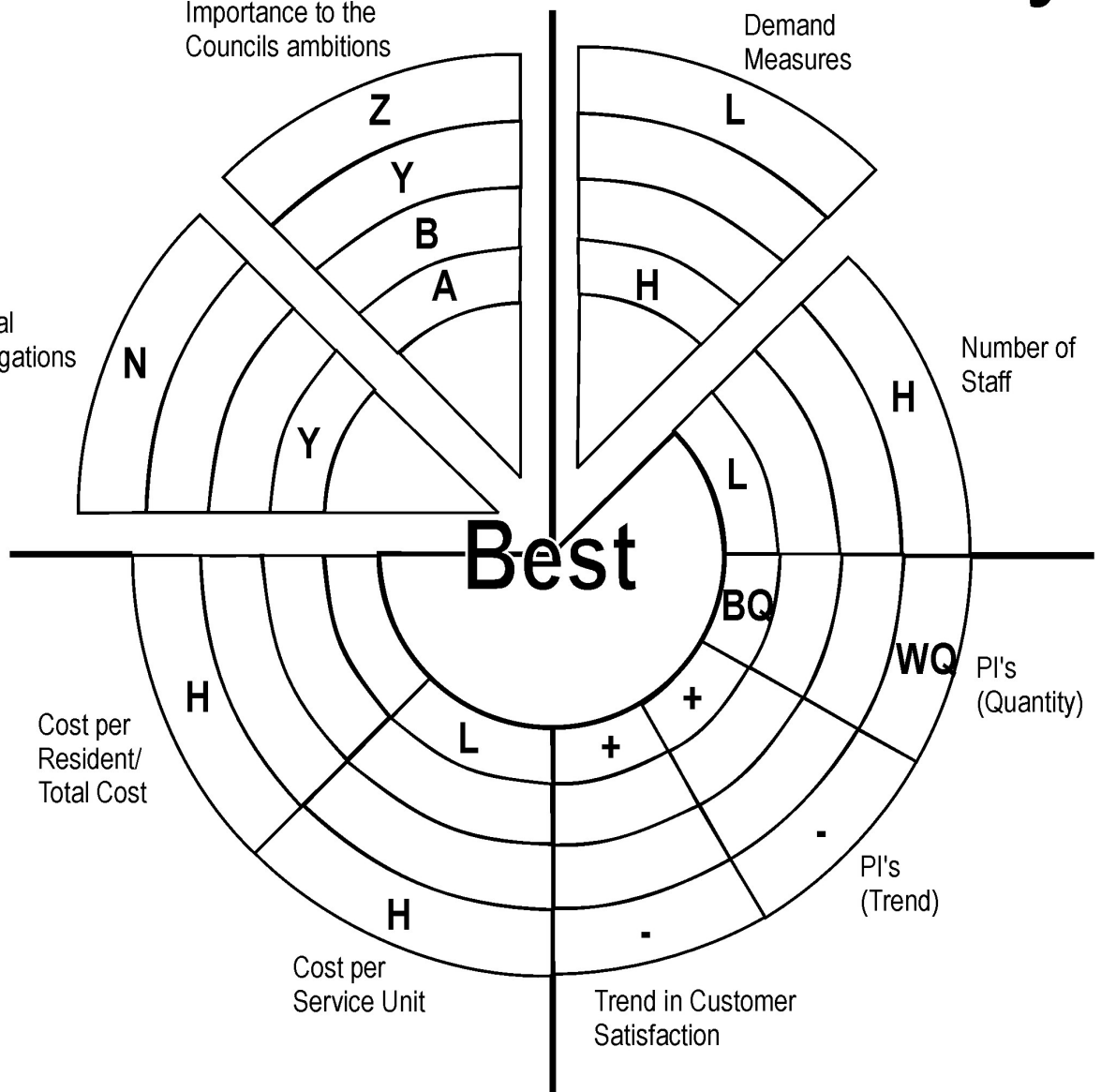
Importance to the
Councils ambitions

Efficiency

Demand
Measures

Legal
Obligations

Number of
Staff



Economy

Effectiveness

H = High L = Low BQ = Best Quartile WQ = Worst Quartile A,B,Y,Z = Service Classification
+ = Positive Trend - = Negative Trend

Section 1 – Setting the Scene - The context, drivers and reasons for service provision

1.1 Remit of the Service – Brief Overview of the service:

The determination of planning (and associated) applications made pursuant to the provisions of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990.

Enforcement of breaches on planning controls

Determination of applications under Part 8 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 dealing with high hedges.

1.2 How does the service contribute to the Vision Priorities and Values of the Council?

Development Control will support the Economic portfolio member ensuring that the communities of South Kesteven has a vibrant economy that is sustainable and developing to meet the current and future needs of residents. The delivery of the service will also support the work of the Housing and the Environment portfolio members.

Category A

Anti-social Behaviour – through initiatives such as “Secure by Design” and also through the use of Planning Obligations eg Developer contributions for CCTV etc. Additionally, the Service will be involved in the enforcement of High Hedges legislation. The determination of high hedges applications under part 8 of the Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003.

Street Scene – through the use of Planning Conditions or obligations eg for the provision of Litter Bins. Improving the design and external appearance of new buildings.

Town Centre Redevelopment – Contribution to quality design through the Development control Process

Category B

Planning and conservation – Determination of planning applications and enforcement in accordance with agreed targets and quality standards

Affordable Housing – Through planning obligations – S106 agreements for Affordable Housing. Together with consideration of Exceptions sites under policy H8 of the Local Plan

1.3 Key Drivers for the Service

National/Regional

- Statutory obligation to provide a planning service (Local Planning Authority)
- National Planning Guidance (PPG's, PPS's, Government Circulars, Ministerial statements)
- Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8)

Local

- Best Value review 2001
- Development Plan (Structure Plan, LDF etc)

Section 2 – Where are we now?

How does the service meet Customer expectations?

Customer satisfaction survey currently indicates that the service

How does the service meet its objectives?

Key objective of service is to continue to improve and achieve national BVPI targets. Table below details both national and local targets. The following section details actual performance.

BVPI Description	BVPI Target	SKDC 5/6	SKDC 6/7	SKDC 7/8
109a % major apps in 13 wks	60%	65%	70%	70%
109b % minor apps in 8 wks	65%	75%	78%	80%
109c % other apps in 8 wks	80%	85%	86%	87%
204 % of appeals allowed against refusals on permissions	<i>tbc</i>	30%	30%	30%
205 Score against service checklist	<i>Tbc</i>	83.3%	88.8%	88.8%

Key achievements and outcomes

All 3 BVPI 109 targets have been exceeded for the last 2 PDG years. This has resulted in a PDG allocation of £624K for the period 03/04. The final allocation for year 04/05 has yet to be determined.

How does the service compare:

<http://vfm.audit-comission.gov.uk/HomePage.aspx>

To other service providers?

All other service providers are LPA's (see below)

To other Councils?

Planning expenditure per head of population by Authority group

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004
South Kesteven District Council	4.54	3.8	3.91	5.28
Borough of Crewe and Nantwich	6.13	5.35	5.3	6.18
Wyre Forest District Council	6.8	8.08	9.19	7.41
St Edmundsbury Borough Council	6.68	7.52	10.57	7.71
High Peak Borough Council	7.85	8.2	10.16	7.72
West Wiltshire District Council	5.13	3.84	7.14	7.98
Braintree District Council	7.81	6.91	8.48	9.05
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	3.72	6	9.15	9.29
Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council	9.38	7.46	8.34	9.53
Kettering Borough Council	6.75	14.08	11.37	11.48
North Warwickshire Borough Council	9.74	9.56	9.54	11.55
Newark and Sherwood District Council	9.35	9.36	11.35	11.92
Stafford Borough Council	8.92	9.59	11.53	12.44
Vale Royal Borough Council	9.18	9.8	11.62	12.81
East Northamptonshire Council	5.96	11.33	12.69	15.57
East Staffordshire Borough Council	11.52	15.51	15.64	17.52

Planning delivery grant allocations By family group

2004/05	£000's	2005/06	£000's
1 St Edmundsbury Borough Council	517	1 Vale Royal Borough Council	754
2 West Wiltshire District Council	414	2 Kettering Borough Council	708
3 High Peak Borough Council	414	3 South Kesteven District Council	624
4 Newark and Sherwood District Council	335	4 Newark and Sherwood District Council	542
5 East Northamptonshire Council	335	5 Braintree District Council	478

6 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	323	6 Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council	452
7 Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council	283	7 East Northamptonshire Council	450
8 Braintree District Council	282	8 Borough of Crewe and Nantwich	450
9 North Warwickshire Borough Council	234	9 North Warwickshire Borough Council	449
10 East Staffordshire Borough Council	220	10 Wyre Forest District Council	433
11 Borough of Crewe and Nantwich	187	11 West Wiltshire District Council	395
12 Kettering Borough Council	184	12 Stafford Borough Council	333
13 Wyre Forest District Council	158	13 St Edmundsbury Borough Council	241
14 Vale Royal Borough Council	104	14 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	133
15 South Kesteven District Council	5	15 High Peak Borough Council	111
16 Stafford Borough Council	0	16 East Staffordshire Borough Council	106

Section 3 – Where do we need to be?

Consistently achieving BVPI targets in relation to the determination of planning applications in order to access additional funding through Planning Delivery Grant.

See attached SWOT and PESTLE analysis

Section 4 How do we get there?

Objective	Link to Corporate/Community objectives	Key tasks	Lead Officer	Output Target	Targeted Outcome	Monitoring Arrangements	Risk to achievement	Resources Required	Timescales & Key Milestones
Achievement of BVPI 109a, b and c targets	LSP - Housing and sustainable communities Town Centres and economic development SKDC – Category B priority	Determination of planning applications	R Edwards	60% of major proposals in 13 weeks 65% of minor applications in 8 weeks 80% of other applications in 8 weeks		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly reporting to CMT Monthly team meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protracted S106 negotiations Committee deferrals Loss of staff 	Maintain existing staffing levels as a minimum. Reviewed regularly to ensure that level is appropriate	Ongoing requirement – reported quarterly to ODPM
Scanning and back scanning of planning application files	Access to services	As objective	R Edwards	All records stored electronically	Electronic retrieval of records – CRM compatible storage of information Greater public access to planning information		Insufficient resources Corporate EDRMS project delays	0.5 fte staff. BPR work to further analyse scanning requirements for service	
Review of existing practices and	Access to services	As objective	R Edwards	Report containing recommendations together with the	Positive changes to procedures			external consultant to undertake	

<i>benchmarking against best practice</i>				<i>production of a procedure manual</i>	<i>and practices drawing from best practice examples</i>			<i>review</i>	
<i>Implementation of in house web based planning service to replace existing Welland solution</i>	<i>Access to Services</i>	<i>Develop in house portal</i>	<i>R Edwards</i>	<i>Ability to provide and control on-line planning service</i>	<i>Achievement of maximum points under the Pendleton criteria</i>	<i>Regular meetings with IT and software provider</i>	<i>External software/hardware delivery problems IT support</i>		<i>To be completed April '06</i>
<i>Review of Equalities and Diversity issues (external consultancy of service)</i>	<i>Access to Services</i>	<i>Impact assessments currently being undertaken</i>	<i>R Edwards</i>	<i>Evidential base to show equality of service delivery</i>		<i>Equalities PMG</i>	<i>Insufficient resources available</i>	<i>To be met through PDG allocation</i>	

Section 5 – Gershon - Efficiency

	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	
Target 5%				
Non-Cashable Efficiency Gains				
	2005/6 £	2006/7 £	2007/8 £	Evidence
“Much more for a little more” <i>Proportionately more outputs or quality for an increase in resources</i>	The service is currently staffed at levels well below the ODPM's recognised levels. The marked increase in performance has been on the back of very small investment.			
“More for the same” <i>Increasing performance level (quantity &/or quality) for same inputs</i>	Increased use of electronic applications for planning submissions and archived material			
Cashable Efficiency Gains				
“More for less” <i>Achieving improved performance level by reduced costs (procurement, labour costs etc)</i>	Maintenance of current budget			
“The same for less” <i>Achieving same performance level by using fewer inputs</i>				
Other Savings				
“Less for even less” <i>Scaling down outputs and inputs</i>				

"Full disinvestment" <i>Stopping doing something</i>				
Totals				
(%) of service budget				

Section 6 – Financial Summary

6.1 Resources Estimates

	Rev Budget	Budget	Indicative changes	
	Current	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Staff number of FTE by broad pay band s1-11 £11k - £23.5k PM1-8 £24k - £35k Hay £35.9k 0 £46K	8.5 10 1			
Finance - Capital Major Asset acquisitions & improvements or key projects - Revenue Employees Premises Transport Third Party Payments Supplies & Services Support Services	£K see 6.2 below see attached	£K	£K	£K
Information Systems Requirement for investment and development of ICT	See 6.2 below			

6.2 Explain the major procurement options and proposals over the next three years?

PLANNING DELIVERY GRANT 2005/2006

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY (NB. Figures are estimates)

1. Back scanning archived planning files

Back scanning of planning application files	Back scanning of planning application files. This is a continuation of an ongoing project. Approximately 3-4 years worth of back scanning of files has already been completed. Estimated annual cost £7500 pa. Sum of £30,000 represents cost of back scanning for previous 3-4 years files plus ongoing scanning for the current year.	£30,000
Ongoing scanning for planning portal	Daily scanning of planning application files for public viewing on the internet. This is a significant drain on existing admin. resources, and significant delays are sometimes	£15,000

	experienced. Provision for the appointment of a part-time dedicated scanning assistant. (suggested 12-month contract reviewable in the light of future PDG awards).	
2. IT initiatives		
Web interface for existing planning application administration system	Presently the web interface is provided by the Welland On-Line system. Functionality is limited. Providing a robust two-way interface has been difficult, and inefficient. The existing supplier of the planning application administration system (Swift LG) has developed an integrated web-interface that will provide a more robust and sustainable solution. Cost of acquisition and implementation	£50,000
Implementation of outstanding 'Pendleton' criteria / web-development	One factor which contributes to PDG is compliance with Pendleton Criteria for e-gov compliance in the planning area. Provision to meet outstanding criteria; appeals details online, application progress monitoring online, view decision notices online, planning conditions online, fee-payment online, map linked to planning policy text. Development of planning web facilities particularly in relation to LDF.	£20,000
Display screens	Replacement flat screen VDU's within Planning	£5,000
Presentation equipment	Digital projectors and display equipment, to reflect increasing numbers of presentations and display equipment to aid LDF consultation	£5,000
3. External consultancy of service		
Management consultancy – 'peer review'	External peer type review by planning consultant to review development control processes / practices with a view to service efficiencies / improvements	£30,000
Diversity and Equality within Planning Services	Consultancy project to identify necessary actions to ensure equality of service delivery	£20,000
Arboricultural survey	Review of existing TPO's dating back to 1954, accurate verification and GIS plotting (also required to fully GIS enable Land Charges).	£30,000
Member training	Additional provision for specialist member training	£2,000
4. Replace existing furniture and improve accommodation		
Furniture	Provisional sum to upgrade workstations	£2,500
5. Input into LDF projects to help ensure that an up to date plan is available		
Grantham Town Centre Masterplan / Action Area Plan	Review and roll forward of Masterplan as contemplated in Draft Town Centre Action Plan. Masterplan to form the basis of Grantham Town Centre Action Plan which is included in the approved LDS.	£40,000
Stamford Action Area Plan	Preparation of an Action Area Plan contemplated in Draft Town Centre Action Plan and contained within the approved LDS	£40,000
Employment Land Survey	Partner document to Urban Capacity Study, necessary background document to LDF	£10,000
Developer contributions	Contained within the approved LDS	£50,000

SPD		
Retail Capacity Study update	Update of existing study necessary to reflect changing policy context, in particular Grantham's promotion as a sub-regional centre.	£35,000
6. Team development		
Team development	Across Development Control and Planning Policy & Economic Regeneration. Team development / service development event(s).	£20,000
Training	Additional training provisions for planning staff, including conference attendance (incl. Town & Country Planning Summer School)	£15,000
7.Future projects		
Bourne Town Centre Manager gap funding	Welland SSP part-funding of post now withdrawn after 3 years. Anticipated future funding via Bourne Core Area redevelopment; gap funding (50% of salary for 3 years) pending implementation of core area proposals	£30,000
8. District wide housing needs survey		
Housing needs survey	Authorised by Cabinet and in progress. Necessary background document to LDF	£110,000
Contingency	As the figures provided are at this stage estimates, a balancing contingency sum (of 12%) is included to secure the delivery of the above projects	£64,604
TOTAL		£624,104
<p>6.3 What are the training and development requirements of this Service Plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing career grade planning officers (x2) currently in final year of study Senior planning officer currently undertaking a Masters in historic building conservation. PDG budget set aside to cover specific training requirements. 		

Section 7 - Risk

7.1 What significant risks to the service have been identified and how will they be managed?

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Action
	High, Medium, Low	High, Medium, Low	
1. Vulnerability of existing web based services delivered through Welland Partnership. Problems are slow to resolve and non availability of electronic service could result in complaints and possible legal challenges.	M	L	Budgeted for in-house portal system
2. Reliance on "hard copy and paper based storage systems" for background/supporting documentation to planning decisions – any major incident would make it difficult if not impossible to retrieve this information until ERDMS is fully implemented with appropriate back scanning.	L	H	EDRMS system under way. Budgeted for further scanning
3. Potential for the loss of existing trained staff at all levels of the operation. (in view of national shortages)	M	H	
4. National shortage of qualified staff	H	H	In-house trainee programme
5. Costs implications of decisions reached by members contrary to officer advice	M	M	Risk identified in corporate risk register